

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

FEBRUARY 12, 2010 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 VOL. 53 ISSUE 6

BLT 2/7 joins Royal Thai, ROK Marines in amphibious exercise

LANCE CPL. JOVANE HOLLAND

31ST MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT

HAT YAO, Thailand – The Marines and sailors of Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, joined more than 500 Marine and Naval personnel from the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of Korea and other U.S. Marines and sailors as they stormed the beach during a mock amphibious assault as part of Exercise Cobra Gold 2010, Feb. 4.

The purpose of the mock amphibious assault was to orchestrate a forcible entry and get troops ashore in a simulated hostile situation while collaborating with different militaries, said Lt. Col. Stuart Lockhart, the executive officer of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

“Amphibious landings are part of our Marine Corps history,” Lockhart said. “It is important that we test ourselves on our knowledge and work with our counterparts to perfect our skills as a united force.”

The exercise began with groups of reconnaissance Marines maneuvering Combat Rubber Raiding

See **LANDING, A5**



STAFF SGT. LEO A. SALINAS

Lance Cpl. Jang Soon Park, a translator with the Republic of Korea Marine Corps, provides security as U.S. Marines attached to Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, assemble on a skirmish line, Feb. 3. The MEU is currently participating in exercise Cobra Gold 2010. The exercise is the latest in a continuing series designed to promote regional peace and security.

3/11 welcomes new sergeant major

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Sgt. Maj. Maximino Torres III relieved Sgt. Maj. Robert Lee Caldwell as the sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, during a post and relief ceremony at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Feb. 5.

Torres, a Cleveland native, who was promoted to his current

rank while serving as the first sergeant of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, took the reigns of the battalion with the intentions of picking up exactly where Caldwell left off and continue to set the standard for his subordinates, he said.

“I love to take care of all my Marines,” Torres said. “I will continue to lead by example the same way that Sgt. Maj. Caldwell did.”

“I’m happy to be with the king

of battle,” he said. “Artillery was my original [military occupational specialty] when I first came in.”

Caldwell took his time to give thanks to his friends and family, as well as the Marines he led in battle over the past four years.

“It has been a pleasure,” said the Spartanburg, S.C., native. “I just want to give my thanks and best wishes to all the Marines of

See **3/11, A6**



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Sgt. Maj. Maximino Torres III [center] relieved Sgt. Maj. Robert Lee Caldwell [right] during a post and relief ceremony for 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Feb. 5 at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field. Lt. Col. Eduardo Abisellan [far left] is the commanding officer of the battalion.



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Lance Cpl. Jordan Clay, a team leader with Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, searches for enemy activity during a Tactical Small Unit Leaders Course exercise at Combat Center Range 200 Tuesday.

‘First Team’ trains new leaders

CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

From the moment an infantry Marine joins his unit he waits for his opportunity to lead Marines in combat. Thanks to the Tactical Small Unit Leaders Course, those

Marines can lead their peers with the knowledge and confidence needed to be successful.

More than 45 Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, completed the TSULC here today as part of the unit's preparation to replace 2nd Bn., 7th

Marines, aboard the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit later this summer.

Lt. Col. Todd Simmons, the battalion commander, said TSULC, a three-week course, gives Marines the

See **LEADERS, A7**

3rd CEB bids farewell to sergeant major

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marines and sailors of 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion welcomed their new sergeant major and said farewell to the sergeant major who was with them since the battalion's activation in 2008 during a post and relief ceremony at their motor pool, Wednesday.

Sgt. Maj. Robert E. Sites Jr., the incoming battalion sergeant major, took charge of the battalion with the goal of picking up where Sgt. Maj. James D. Walsh left off, Sites said.

“It is a wonderful experience stepping into something that requires very little tweaking, which gives me the ability to move forward,” said Sites, a Kenton, Ohio, native. “After I spoke with Sgt. Maj. Walsh, I knew I couldn't move into a better unit.”

Sites joined the battalion in time for their upcoming deployment to

See **FAREWELL, A10**



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Sgt. Maj. James D. Walsh, the outgoing battalion sergeant major for 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion, relinquishes the noncommissioned officer sword to Lt. Col. James H. Bain, the battalion's commanding officer, during a post and relief ceremony Wednesday at the battalion's motor pool.



From sea to sand ~ See **A3**



K-9 capabilities ~ See **A4**



Semper fight ~ See **B1**



Make it rain! ~ See **B4**

Tax Tips

Is this income taxable?

IRS TAX TIP 2010 #25

While most income you receive is generally considered taxable, there are some situations when certain types of income are partially taxed or not taxed at all.

To ensure taxpayers are familiar with the difference between taxable and non-taxable income, the Internal Revenue Service offers these common examples of items which are not included in your income:

- Adoption expense reimbursements for qualifying expenses
- Child support payments
- Gifts, bequests and inheritances
- Workers' compensation benefits
- Meals and lodging for the convenience of your employer
- Compensatory damages awarded for physical injury or physical sickness
- Welfare benefits
- Cash rebates from a dealer or manufacturer

Some income may be taxable under certain circumstances, but not taxable in other situations. Examples of items that may or may not be included in your income are:

- **Life insurance.** If you surrender a life insurance policy for cash, you must include in income any proceeds which are more than the cost of the life insurance policy. Life insurance proceeds, which were paid to you because of the insured person's death, are not taxable unless the policy was turned over to you for a price.
- **Scholarships or fellowship grants.** If you are a candidate for a degree, you can exclude amounts you receive as a qualified scholarship or fellowship. Amounts used for room and board do not qualify.
- **Non-cash income.** Taxable income may be in a form other than cash. One example of this is bartering, which is an exchange of property or services. The fair market value of goods and services exchanged is fully taxable and must be included as income on Form 1040 of both parties.

All other items – including income such as wages, salaries and tips – must be included in your income unless it is specifically excluded by law.

These examples are not all-inclusive. For more information, see Publication 525, Taxable and Nontaxable Income, which can be obtained at IRS.gov or by calling the IRS at 800-TAX-FORM.

Centerspeak

Who is your favorite president and why?

Opinions expressed in Centerspeak are not necessarily those of the OBSERVATION POST, the Marine Corps or the Department of Defense.



SGT. CHRISTOPHER OROZCO
TACTICAL TRAINING EXERCISE CONTROL GROUP

“George Washington because he is the only president to be voted in unanimously.”



LANCE CPL. ERICK BENSON
REMAIN-BEHIND ELEMENT, 2ND BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

“Franklin D. Roosevelt because he served longer, and dealt with the depression and WW II.”



MAJ. STEVEN STORMANT
G-3, HEADQUARTERS BATTALION

“Ronald Reagan because he didn't take crap from anybody.”

Hot Topics

MARSOC SCREENING TEAM VISIT

The Marine Corps Special Operations Command will visit the Combat Center Feb. 23 to brief and screen Marines. There will be two briefs. The first brief will be held at 8 a.m. for the following units: 1/7, 3rd LAR, 1st Tanks, and 3rd AAB. The second brief will be held at 1 p.m. for MWSS-374, 3/11, MCCES, 3/7, VMU-1, VMU-3, and CLB-7. Both briefs will take place in building 2070 on 13th Street. Officers will not be screened on this visit. For more information call 830-6171.

BLOOD DRIVE

A blood drive conducted by the Community Blood Bank will be held Feb. 26 at the Combat Center's Protestant Chapel from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Prospective donors can make appointments online at <http://www.cbbc-blood.org> using the sponsor code Marine1, or by calling 773-4190. Walk-ins are also welcome.

COMICS ON DUTY TOUR

The “Comics on Duty Tour” comedy show is scheduled to make a stop at the Combat Center Feb. 26 at 1:30 and 5:30 p.m. as part of the THAT GUY campaign at no cost to service members, civilian employees and family members over the age of 18. The goal of the tour is to educate audiences about the dangers of binge drinking, which will help reduce the number of alcohol-related incidents aboard Department of Defense installations. For more information, call the Substance Abuse Counseling Center at 830-6376.

COMBAT CENTER TAX OFFICE

Free and accurate tax filing is now available through the installation tax office in building 1651 on 7th Street. Tax center personnel are now available to answer any tax-related questions. The tax office is currently open for walk-in customers from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Appointments will be available starting Tuesday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, questions, or to schedule appointments, call 830-4829.

Marine Corps History

Feb. 13, 1943

The Marine Corps Women's Reserve is formed.



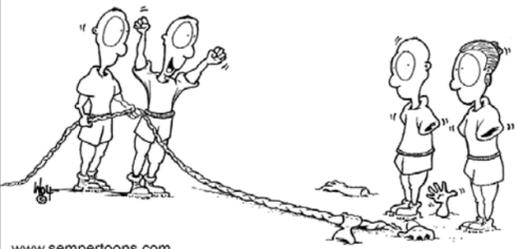
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	3		9			1	2

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2010 HOMETOWN CONTENT

School Liaison Information



Question: What are the requirements for high school graduation in California?

Answer: Find the Web site listed below for California's requirements, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/hsgngen.asp>. Also, please note that all students must pass the California High School Exit Examination to graduate. Sample tests and study guides provide additional support for success: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs>.

For more information, please contact smbplmsmccsschooliaison@usmc.mil or call 830-1574.

Combat Center Spotlight

Name: Lance Cpl. Cosme Cardenas
Hometown: Hesperia, Calif.
Job title: Light Armored Vehicle mechanic
Unit: Exercise Support Division, ordnance shop
Job duties: Maintaining LAVs for units aboard the base training.
What do you like most about your job? Making sure the vehicles Marines need for training are in working order.
Hobbies: “Attending and participating in Charridos.”
Military Service: 18 months
Time at Combat Center: 10 months



GREEN PUZZLE

[puzzle Solutions on A10]

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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56						57	58				59			
60						61					62			
63						64					65			

ACROSS

1. Certain to happen
6. Boarded up
10. Baylor University city
14. Car or Papas
15. “El ___” (Marty Robbins hit)
16. “In the same place,” in footnotes
17. “Paul Revere’s Ride” poet
19. “Nick at ___”
20. General on Chinese menus
21. Pupil’s locale
22. Yak away
24. President after Calvin
26. 1/40 of the north forty
27. Surgery ctrs.
28. Led Zeppelin’s “___ to Heaven”
32. Shredded side dishes
35. Jordan’s Queen ___
36. Made a donation
37. Dosage unit
38. Milker’s containers
39. From square one
40. Voting nay
41. Lunar valley
42. Some USN officers
43. Like hot dogs with out casings
45. Ship’s pronoun
46. One of a subculture known for wearing black
47. Jennifer of “Friends”
51. Scramble, as a signal
54. Bric-a-___
55. “___ had enough!”
56. General enough
57. National park in Florida
60. Super-secure airline
61. “The Lion King” queen
62. Tennis legend Chris
63. Act the couch potato
64. Bump off
65. Lab jobs

DOWN

1. Grunge
2. Popped up
3. Andrea Bocelli, notably
4. Chang’s twin
5. Rebellious ones
6. Bowler’s headache
7. Dutch portraitist Frans
8. GI-entertaining gp.
9. Luxury Lincolns
10. Olympics of 2006 or 2010
11. Just slightly
12. Slap with a ticket
13. River through Poland
18. Drops an easy one
23. Jackie’s O
25. Sphere with three holes, normally
26. Lagoon former
28. Smears mud on
29. Harry Potter’s stick
30. State with surety
31. Trees yielding elastic wood
32. Mud bath sites
33. Sausage unit
34. Height: Prefix
35. Chan player J. Carrol ___
38. Sixth-graders, usually
42. Candy-coated hunk of gum
44. Chat room guffaw
45. Hosiery wrecker
47. Orderly formation
48. They go in and out
49. For all to see
50. Hatchlings’ homes
51. Irish or Manx speaker, e.g.
52. Woody’s musical son
53. “It’s been ___!”
54. Banjoist Fleck
58. Kilmer who voiced KITT
59. Forum greeting

OBSERVATION POST

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3rd Bn., 1st Marines, changes focus from sea to desert

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., completed their Enhanced Mojave Viper pre-deployment training evolution Feb. 4 here, as part of the unit's shift from supporting Marine Expeditionary Units to serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The battalion concentrated all their efforts in adapting to the mission, and undertook the task diligently, said 2nd Lt. John Adams, a platoon commander with Company K, 3rd Bn., 1st Marines, and a native of Milwaukee.

"Marines by their nature are very smart and very receptive," Adams said. "Our Marines have been performing very well in terms of picking up a new role, adapting and staying flexible, which is what Marines do best, adapt and overcome."

Adams said the conviction of his Marines, as well as the outstanding training they received is going to pay dividends later.

"All the Marines have been motivated since the very



Marines with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., watch a CH-46 Sea Knight lift off Feb. 1, at Combat Center Range 220 during their Enhanced Mojave Viper predeployment training. The battalion is slated to deploy to Afghanistan this spring to support Operation Enduring Freedom.

beginning," he said. "They're infantry Marines and this is what they joined for.

"In addition, we have been focusing on counterinsur-

gency techniques," he said. "The quality of the training as well has been outstanding. The battalion has been focusing a lot on how to deal with locals, as well as the kinetic aspect."

The Marines who conducted the training thought highly of what they were learning and what it would do for them once they deployed.

"Learning about the culture, tactics and language of Afghans is going to help us tremendously before we even get there," said Lance Cpl. Nathan Davidson, a rifleman with Co. K, 3rd Bn., 1st Marines, and a native of Plainfield, Ind. "We've learned a lot of their native languages in the classes, but talking and interacting with the people is a much better way to become good at speaking it and learning customs."

Some of the more experienced Marines in the battalion, like Cpl. Deano Miller, recognized how their battalion has grown as a unit as they prepared for their new mission.

"It's more serious going to Afghanistan than being on a MEU," said Miller, a rifleman serving as a dog handler with Co. K, 3rd Bn., 1st Marines, and a native of Tacoma, Wash. "We're doing good, though. All the Marines are working hard to get everything they need ready before we deploy."

The battalion is scheduled to depart this spring in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Lance Cpl. Nathan Davidson, a rifleman with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., watches entry control point for his forward operating base Feb. 1 at Combat Center Range 220.



Afghan role players watch Marines from Company K, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., as they search the building below them Jan. 31. The battalion recently completed their Enhanced Mojave Viper at Combat Center Range 220.

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Boots and paws on the ground for OEF

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
LANCE CPL. M. C. NERI**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Dogs have long been known as man's best friend, but the military working dog is also an invaluable tool for Marines deployed overseas, because of its heightened sense of smell, which Marines from 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment learned during their Enhanced Mojave Viper pre-deployment training evolution at Combat Center Range 220.

The dogs are employed and embedded with the platoons, and used when they are needed, said 2nd Lt. John Adams, a platoon commander with Company K, 3rd Bn., 1st Marines, and a native of Milwaukee.

"Having the dogs and trained handlers is a very valuable tool we've been able to implement a lot on patrols and searches," Adams said. "They can smell and detect stuff better than humans can, which makes them great for searching for explosives or drugs."

Adams said the handlers are not a new addition to the team, rather an old Marine who learned new tricks.

"We sent three Marines from Kilo Company to be trained as handlers," he said. "They were already part of the platoons. Now they're right back where they were as part of a team, but they have added skills and abilities from their training."

"So far, the six-week course has paid off a lot," he added. "The dogs, as well as the handlers, have been performing very well and we're looking forward to using them overseas."

Cpl. Deano Miller, a rifleman cross trained for the company as a dog handler, spoke to the lessons he learned and the friend he gained in his working dog, a yellow Labrador retriever named Thor.

"The dogs have helped out a lot on patrols and other situations where we have to search for explosives," said Miller a Tacoma, Wash., native. "We're not the first ones to do this training, but it's great to have something as valuable as a dog's nose when you're searching for what we are."

Miller described his canine companion's mission as a working dog, and as well as his temperament.

"He's a bomb sniffing dog," he said. "Thor is pretty good; he's a well-behaved and very well-trained dog."

"He's like a little kid, though," he continued. "I've got to play with him all the time in the morning and at night, or he doesn't want to work very hard."

Other Marines who know Miller and served with him recognized how he and the other handlers have already made an impact on their team.

"It's awesome that one of our own guys got to do this," said Lance Cpl. Mengqi Xu, a rifleman with the company, and a native of Chicago. "Cpl. Miller was always a good Marine and a good friend. Now we've got someone with skills and experience and trust in our own unit who's going to play a vital role in how we get things done over there."

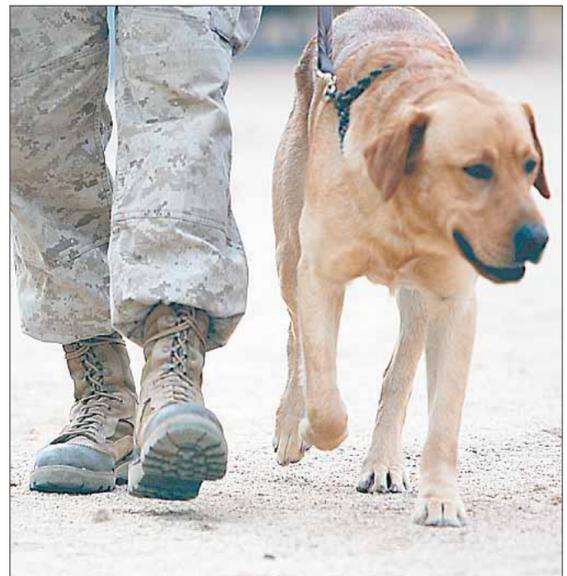
Miller and Thor, along with the other working dog teams, are slated to deploy with the battalion this spring.



Thor, a yellow Labrador retriever, a military working dog with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., scans the desert at Combat Center Range 220 Feb. 2. The dogs are part of the battalion and will deploy with their handlers to provide improvised explosive device detection capabilities.



Cpl. Deano Miller, and his dog, Thor, relax during down time Feb. 1 at Combat Center Range 220. The dog and handler are part of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment and will deploy with the unit this spring.



Thor, a military working dog, and his handler, Cpl. Deano Miller, walk through a town at Combat Center Range 220 Jan 31. The dog and handler are part of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and will deploy with the unit.

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TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt

Valentines Day is Sunday and I will be officiating at four or more weddings this weekend. I love participating in joyous ceremonies when couples make solemn vows with the promise to love each other forever. I officiated in my first wedding in 1947 and have conducted better than 3,500 ceremonies since then. I still officiate in several weddings a month in the High Desert and I enjoy each one.

I have learned a few things over the years as I have prepared people for weddings and counseled literally hundreds of families with special problems.

The primary thing I have learned is that all great relationships require patience, forgiveness and commitment.

I like an anonymous writer's description of commitment:

"Commitment means we take the worst of each other, the best of each other and the in-between of each other. Stirring it all together we say with loyalty and gentle understanding, 'I love and totally accept the mixture of you.'"

Eric Fromm in his masterpiece "The Art of Loving" said it best:

"To love somebody is not just a strong feeling—it is a decision, it is a judgment, it is a promise. If love were only a feeling, there would be no basis for the promise to love forever. Feelings come and go, but love, which is a judgment and a decision, should go on forever."

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LANDING, from A1

Crafts from ship to shore, securing a perimeter and locking on target objectives set in place for follow-on forces.

While the Marines surveyed the area from the beach, Thai paratroopers soared through the sky, providing an aerial set of eyes and landing behind enemy lines to secure the objective.

Clearing the beach of obstacles followed, with close air support from two AH-1W Super Cobras, and two AV-8B Harrier II jets. Controlled explosives were detonated to simulate the dropping of ordnances during the air strikes.

Once the beach was clear, 24 amphibious assault vehicles pushed ashore after gliding across the sea from more than 5,000 yards away.

The AAVs stormed the beach in two separate waves, the first consisting of Royal Thai and U.S. Marines, the second of Royal Thai and Republic of Korea Marines.

Once the AAVs secured the area, Marines dismounted to continue the assault inland, conducting fire team rushes until they reached their objective and secured the area.

During the assault support phase of the evolution, a Royal Thai SH-70, U.S. CH-46 Sea Knight and CH-53E super stallion helicopters inserted additional forces to secure a landing zone in close proximity to the objective.

"All of our big toys came out to play today," Lockhart said.

Navy Capt. Don Schmieley, the commodore of Amphibious Squadron 11 and the forward-deployed USS Essex Amphibious Ready Group, said the entire course of action lasted less than an hour, but in a real life situation, the process would take additional detailed planning before executing such a complex mission.

"Everything has to be timed and completely synchronized on every side," he said. "With that in mind, it is of the utmost importance we rehearse the process of moving air and surface equipment in an assault, especially when working in a coalition capacity."

Nearly two months of developing a refined plan, the demonstration was executed exceptionally, Lockhart said.

"We're all Marines and sailors," Lockhart said. "Despite our differences, we have similar doctrines, and that's why this exercise was such a success."

Cobra Gold is a regularly scheduled joint and coalition multinational exercise hosted annually by the Kingdom of Thailand. This year marks the 29th iteration of the exercise, which consists of a Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative Exercise, Command Post Exercise, Humanitarian, and Civic Action projects, and field training exercises.



LANCE CPL. DENGRIER BAEZ

More than 500 Marine and Naval forces from the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of Korea and the U.S. stormed the beach during a mock amphibious assault as part of Exercise Cobra Gold 2010 Feb. 4. Cobra Gold is a regularly scheduled joint and coalition multinational exercise hosted annually by the Kingdom of Thailand. This year marks the 29th iteration of the exercise, which consists of a Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative Exercise, Command Post Exercise, Humanitarian and Civic Action projects, and field training exercises.



LANCE CPL. MICHAEL A. BIANCO

Marines from Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, take part in a joint amphibious assault with Marines from the Kingdom of Thailand and the Republic of Korea Feb. 3.

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LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Sgt. Maj. Maximino Torres III, the new sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, relieved Sgt. Maj. Robert Lee Caldwell Feb. 5 at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field. Torres previously served as the first sergeant of Company K, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Sgt. Maj. Maximino Torres III, the new sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, relieves Sgt. Maj. Robert Lee Caldwell Feb. 5.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Sgt. Maj. Maximino Torres III, accepts the noncommissioned officer sword as sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Feb. 5 from Lt. Col. Eduardo Abisellan, the commanding officer of the battalion. Torres assumed his new role during a post and relief ceremony at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

3/11, from A1

3/11, the commanding officer and their families." Lt. Col. Eduardo Abisellan, the commanding officer of 3rd Bn., 11th Marines, served with Caldwell for only a short time, but still recognized the impact he had on the unit. "Sgt. Maj. Caldwell's genuine love for our Corps, and our Marines and sailors has made a difference, and has endeared him to all," the Miami native said. "I have been fortunate throughout my career to have [staff noncommissioned officers] who did not allow me to fail, and have taught me what I needed to know how to be a successful leader." Abisellan said while Caldwell will be missed within

the unit, he has no doubt in his mind the new sergeant major will do an exceptional job. "Sgt. Maj. Caldwell's presence will be missed, but never forgotten," he said. "Today also signifies the continuation of the office of the sergeant major, as Sgt. Maj. Torres takes over for Sgt. Maj. Caldwell. "I have no doubt whatsoever that Sgt. Maj. Torres will step in exactly where Sgt. Maj. Caldwell left off," he continued. "To the Caldwells, I wish continued success and to Sgt. Maj. Torres and his family, welcome to the 3/11 family." Now that Torres has officially become part of the battalion, he will lead his Marines into the future, both in combat and in garrison, he said.

Release the hounds



KAT SCHMIDT

Drak, a military working dog from the Combat Center's Provost Marshal's Office, shows his handler, Sgt. Kenneth Fischer, some love at the PMO kennels before they deployed to Afghanistan Feb. 5. Fischer, a military working dog handler attached to PMO from III Marine Expeditionary Force, and 14 other handlers and dogs will provide improvised explosive device detection capabilities to Regimental Combat Teams in theater.

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<p>St. Joseph of Arimathea Episcopal Church God Loves You As If You Were His Only Child. Holy Eucharist 10:00 A.M. Onaga at Church St., Y.V. 365-7133</p>	<p>New Beginning Community Church Pastor Lynn Gary Thompson Christ Centered Church Sunday School - 9:30 am Adult & Youth Worship Service - 10:30 am Music & Fun - 6:00 pm 55922 29 Palms Hwy., Yucca Valley 760-910-5261</p>	<p>DESERT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Call for free van ride Sunday 10:00 A.M. - Worship Sunday School ages 4-10 yrs Visitors Welcome Sunday Concert Series • Call for info 29 Palms • 5688 Sunrise Drive • 361-0086</p>	<p>St. Martin-In-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH Sunday School 10:00 am • Holy Eucharist 10:00 am Sunday Bible Study 9:00 am We're Here for Everyone Phone (760) 367-7133 72348 Larrea Road (2 blocks up from KFC), 29 Palms www.stmartinchurch29.org</p>
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<p>Two Mile Apostolic Tabernacle 74301 Two Mile Rd., 29 Palms (Next to Lucky Park) "Where Jesus Embraces You" Sundays 10:00 am 6:00 pm Wednesdays 7:30 pm Website: TwoMileApostolic.com 760-367-0080</p>	<p>First Baptist Church of 29 Palms Childcare Available Sunday Services Sunday School 9:15 am. Morning Worship 10:30 am. Evening Service 6:00 pm. Wednesday Services Prayer/Bible Study 6:30 pm. Young Married Couples Ministry 6:30 pm. www.fbc29.org 6414 Split Rock Ave., 29 Palms, CA 760-367-7561</p>	<p>Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 AM WE PREACH CHRIST RISEN 59077 Yucca Trail, Yucca Valley CHURCH: 365-2548 Preschool & Daycare: 369-9590</p>	<p>Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church The corner of Utah Trail and National Park Dr. Sat. Mass 4:30 pm Sun. Mass 8:00 am • 10:30 am Call for all other Mass info 760-367-3343</p>

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LEADERS, from A1

tools they need to transition from followers to leaders.

"We're teaching the Marines the basic standards and knowledge needed by fire team leaders to the point they feel confident in coaching and training their Marines," said Simmons, an Watervliet, N.Y., native. "We had a cadre of sergeants, [staff noncommissioned officers] and officers from each company instructing the Marines throughout the course."

The Marines spent three weeks honing their skills in communication, patrolling, isolation, weapons tactics and other elements of combat.

First Lt. Ryan S. Tice, the executive officer of Company A, and a TSULC instructor,

said the Marines continuously improved throughout the course.

"There were Marines with different levels of experience and knowledge out here coming into the course," said Tice, a Nutley, N.J. native. "For me, witnessing the maturation process of these Marines' abilities was amazing. Things we covered in the first couple weeks stuck with the Marines and weren't needed to be brought up again."

Lance Cpl. Thomas B. Freeman, a team leader with Co. C, 1st Bn., 7th Marines, has been with the battalion for nearly two years, and said being put in a leadership position means a lot to him.

"I'm glad to have my skills honed in as a leader," said Freeman, a New Orleans

native. "I've got a greater understanding of the different weapons, assault tactics and basic leadership skills now."

Freeman said working with different Marines throughout the course was a fulcrum point, and he looks forward to training with his Marines again.

"Working with new guys will only get you so far," he said. "It'll be nice to get back to my guys and begin working on our bond. We need to all get on the same page and create that bond and kind of intuition grunts have with each other."

The Marines will be recognized for their hard work and completion of the course during a small graduation ceremony at the battalion headquarters today.



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, take notes during an isolation class as part of the Tactical Small Unit Leaders Course at Combat Center Range 200 Tuesday.



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Lance Cpl. Jordan Clay, a team leader with Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, clears a building during a Tactical Small Unit Leaders Course exercise at Combat Center Range 200 Tuesday. Clay and more than 40 other Marines from the battalion spent three weeks honing crucial skills needed by team leaders to be effective in a combat environment.

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Happy Valentine's Day Love Notes



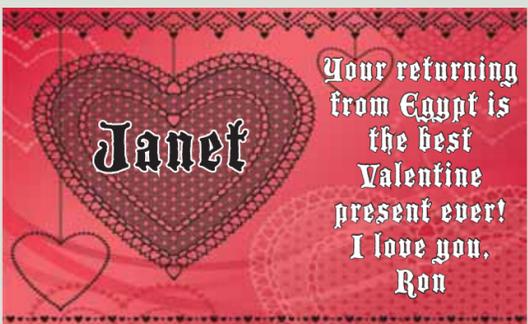

Hey Poppy,
Happy Retirement
after 38 years for
the County. You are
everyone's Valentine.
Love,
Lexie & Cloey



J, T, T, K,
For all my angels,
I love you all
so much.
Mom &
Grandma



My Ohana:
"SNUGS" Life is Hakuna Matata!
Thank you for being
my little rays of
sunshine.
"ATTA BOO"
Love you 2,
Mom



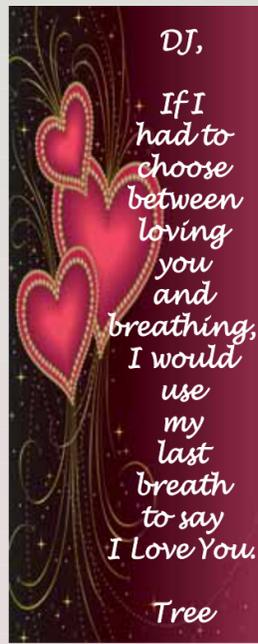
Your returning
from Egypt is
the best
Valentine
present ever!
I love you,
Ron



Happy
Valentine's Day
Mike
Love,
T.



Richard,
A million hearts would
be too few to carry all
my love for you.
Happy Valentines Day
my love!
Michelle



DJ,
If I
had to
choose
between
loving
you
and
breathing,
I would
use
my
last
breath
to say
I Love You.
Tree

Happy Valentine's
Day Shawn and Cole.
We love you!
Love Mom and Dad



Zach & Nick,
Two of the
reasons that my
life is complete.
Happy
Valentine's Day
Love, Mom



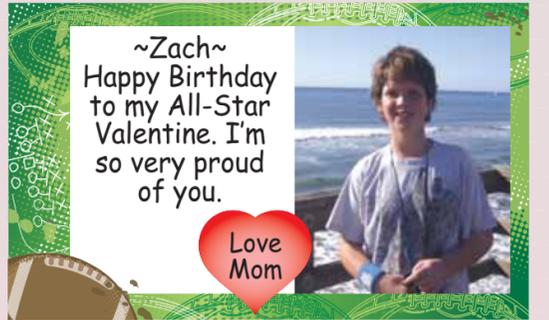
"HAVING
FUN"
We've only just
begun.
Happy Valentine's
Day, Blue Eyes from
Your Baby



Happy Valentines Day T-Bird,
Love Miss Wendy



God Bless
You
Marty
Love,
Gene



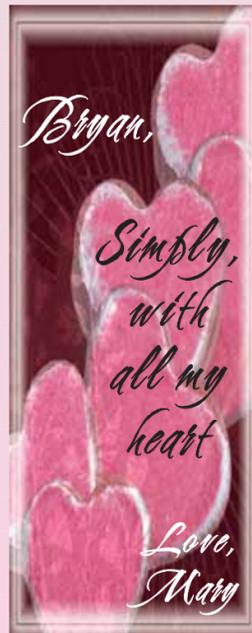
~Zach~
Happy Birthday
to my All-Star
Valentine. I'm
so very proud
of you.
Love
Mom



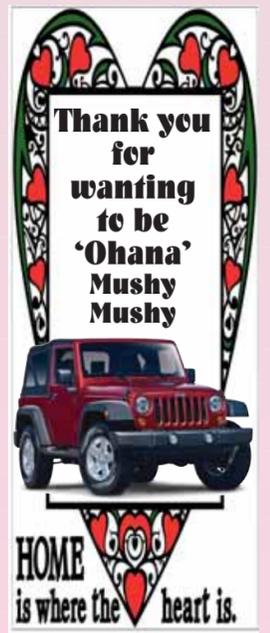
To my Baby and her Baby
Happy Valentine's Day
I love you more than a candy store!
Muah Mommy Mema




Oh yes, my grandparents
really love me - but then
again, who wouldn't?
Lola Day
Budd
We do love you
sweetheart!
Grandma, Grandpa, Aunt
Moni and Uncle Eddie!



Bryan,
Simply,
with
all my
heart
Love,
Mary



Thank you
for
wanting
to be
'Ohana'
Mushy
Mushy
HOME
is where the heart is.

Heart health for women

TYLER PATTERSON
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

Heart disease. Many people think of it as a man's disease, but women can get it too. In fact, according to the American Heart Association, heart disease is the number one killer of women in the United States—making heart health an important issue for women of all ages.

The most common cause of heart disease is coronary artery disease, a narrowing or blockage of the coronary arteries that supply blood to the heart. Luckily, the steps you can take to help prevent CAD are effective against other causes of heart disease as well.

- **Eat a healthy diet.** Choosing healthy meals and snack options can help you avoid heart disease. Be sure to eat plenty of fish, poultry, and fresh fruits – and don't forget the veggies!
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese

can increase your risk for heart disease. Your doctor can help you determine whether your weight is in a healthy range.

- **Exercise regularly.** Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and help lower your blood pressure and cholesterol.

- **Don't smoke.** Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease and other major illnesses. If you smoke, quit!

- **Limit alcohol use.** Alcohol causes high blood pressure. If you drink, drink responsibly and in moderation. If you have other risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, you can take additional steps to lower your risk for heart disease.

- **Have your cholesterol checked.** Your doctor should test your cholesterol levels at least once a year.

- **Monitor your blood pressure.** High blood pressure has no symptoms so be sure to have it

checked regularly.

- **Manage your diabetes.** If you have diabetes, monitor your blood sugar levels closely.

- **Take your medication.** If you are taking medication for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, it's important to follow your doctor's instructions and remember to take your medications regularly. Always ask questions if you don't understand something.

- **Talk with your doctor.** You and your doctor can work together to prevent or treat the medical conditions that lead to heart disease. Regularly discuss your treatment plan and don't forget to bring a list of questions to your doctor's appointments.

For more information on heart health, visit the American Heart Association at <http://www.americanheart.org>, or search for "Heart Disease" at <http://www.triwest.com/beneficiary>.

Register now for 'Heart to Heart' luncheon

PRESS RELEASE

EAST VALLEY WOMEN'S CONNECTION

East Valley Women's Connection will host their third annual "Heart To Heart" Appreciation Luncheon March 13 at the Doral Resort in Cathedral City, Calif.

This event is to honor active duty military women and the wives of active duty military from the Combat Center.

The day will include a wonderful lunch and a fashion show by Kohl's of La Quinta. The models for the fashion show will be the active duty military women and

the wives of active duty military from the Combat Center.

There will also be a musical performance featuring soloist Terri Griffin, who is an accomplished artist with an extensive background in musical presentations at the McCallum Theater.

Our speakers, Bob and Yvonne Turnbull, are directors for Turnbull Ministries, which focuses on healing marriages.

Early registration will qualify for a Coach purse drawing to be given at the luncheon. There is also a drawing for a beauty make over donated by Asher's Salon. The beauty reveal will take place

the day of the luncheon.

Each military woman attendee will receive a beautiful \$25 gift basket. There are many exciting door prizes to be given away at the luncheon. All the events, plus child care and bus transportation, are provided at no cost to the attendee. Reservations are a must. The deadline to register is Feb. 20. To register or receive more information, please call the Armed Services YMCA at 830-7481.

East Valley Women's Connection is affiliated with Stonecroft Ministries, which is based in Kansas City, Mo.

Straight answers about veterans' benefits

PRESS RELEASE

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

The Disabled American Veterans will host a public forum Saturday at 1 p.m. in the Yucca Valley Community Center to provide outreach concerning its program services to disabled veterans and their families.

DAV information seminars are designed to educate disabled veterans and their families on specific veterans' benefits and services from the Department of Veterans

Affairs, the Department of Defense and other government agencies.

Members of the DAV National Service Officer Corps will be present to offer counseling and assistance filing disability claims. The service is free of charge, and open

to veterans from all eras and their families.

The DAV is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building better lives for disabled veterans and their families. For more information, log on to <http://www.dav.org>.

Combat Center Trader Ads

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2005 DODGE RAM VIPER TRUCK. Commemorative edition, 505 HP, 6-speed, white and blue. \$31,500. 408-9088. 12/4/09

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TWO TOBONO PAINTS, A MARE AND A GELDING. Trying to sell or lease for \$225 per month per horse. Sell price is \$3,500 for mare, \$5,000 for gelding. OBO. Call Tim. Home 365-0831. Cell 883-0293. 12/11/09

The deadline for submitting Trader Ads is noon Wednesday, for the upcoming Friday's newspaper.

Trader Ad forms are available at the Public Affairs Office and may be filled out during normal working hours at Bldg. 1417. Ads may also be submitted through e-mail, but will only be accepted from those with an @usmc.mil

address. If you are active duty, retired military or a family member and do not have an @usmc.mil address you can go to the PAO page of the base Web site at: <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/dirs/pao/> and complete a request to publish an ad.

The limitations for ads are: 15-word limit, limit of two ads per household and the Trader may be

used only for noncommercial classified ads containing items of personal property offered by and for individuals authorized to use this service. Such ads must represent incidental exchanged not of sustained business nature.

Ads for housing rentals will not be considered for the Combat Center Trader.

To have a "House For Sale" ad run in the Observation Post, applicants must provide Permanent Change of Station orders and have the ad approved by Base Housing. This ensures the Combat Center Trader is not used for commercial real estate endeavors.

Ads are run on a first-come, first-serve, space available basis. If you have questions please call 830-6213.

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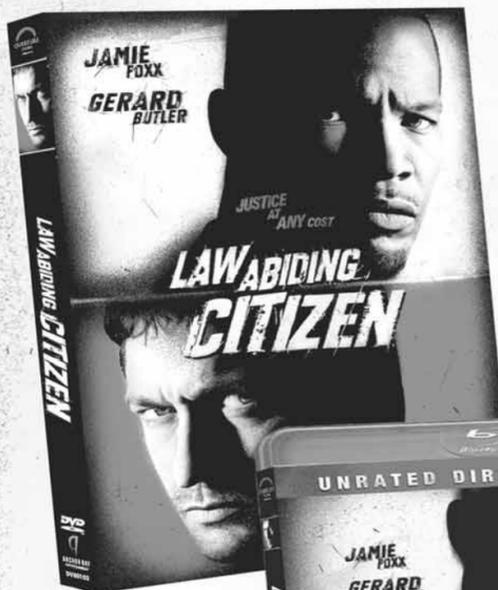
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SPORTS AND LEISURE

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FEBRUARY 12, 2010

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B1

Marine uses Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu to enhance combat effectiveness in Afghanistan

LANCE CPL. WALTER MARINO
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan — After watching Royce Gracie use Brazilian jiu-jitsu to force wrestlers, boxers and martial artists to tap out, Staff Sgt. Noel B. Min, a utilities chief for Regimental Combat Team 7, was hooked.

"In the Ultimate Fighting Championship 1, I saw this little guy, Royce Gracie, tack on these big dudes using BJJ, and I wanted to get to know more about it," Min said. "I started with wrestling and I progressed even further. I've been doing BJJ seriously for the past four years."

Min's skills led to a third-degree blue belt in BJJ, and entered many competitions before deploying. While stationed in Virginia, Min won the East Coast Grappling Championship in the blue belt, 150 to 160-pound categories.

It was very satisfying having years of hard work pay off. But more than that, what I got out of it was the learning experience, Min said. "I found out what I was weak at, what I could improve on and what my strengths were."

Now in Afghanistan, Min, a certified Marine Corps Martial Arts black belt instructor, continues to keep his skills sharp by teaching fellow Marines BJJ.

"I'm learning a lot of variations of techniques," said Cpl. Chris N. Meza, a Marine Corps Martial Arts green belt instructor for RCT-7. "I wanted to give a different insight to my Marines. BJJ helps a smaller person like me use techniques to my advantage."

In sports like boxing, a taller fighter with a longer reach could have a significant advantage over a

smaller opponent. But in BJJ, the art was specifically designed for the smaller man to overcome larger opponents with technique.

The creator of BJJ, Helio Gracie, was a short man, with very little muscle, but was still able to overcome opponents with leverage and technique, said Min, from Huntsville, Ala.

"It's a mental game," Min said. "Using what you have and maximizing it."

Similarly, not every Marine has beastly strength and is six feet tall. Yet, smaller Marines can be seen doing the same jobs bigger Marines do.

"With the Marine Corps, it's always known; do what you can with what you have. I think that in itself is what the Marine Corps is all about," Min said.

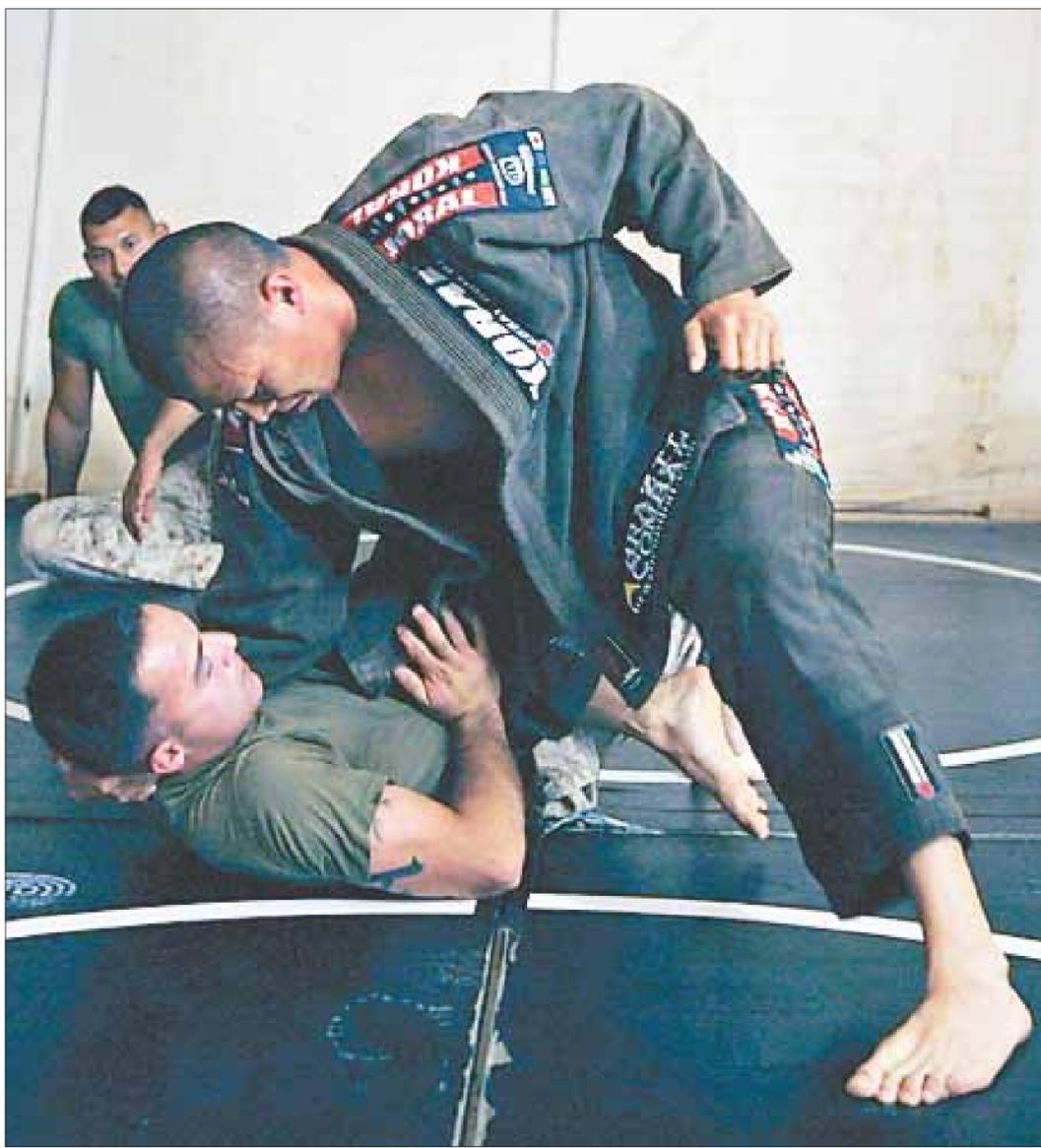
Min said, BJJ can also teach how to keep calm under stress.

When grappling, practitioners of the sport work to keep their minds clear in order to execute their attacks with ease.

"It's all about keeping calm under stress and being able to really think and take advantage of your opponent's weaknesses," Min said.

As Min and his students practice their moves, the elements of BJJ they learn could prove to be an invaluable asset during their deployment in Afghanistan.

"Just like all martial arts, it's about control and self discipline. BJJ teaches you a lot about using your mind, using leverage and not muscling everything," Min said. "It's about winning or learning, and either way whether you win or lose you always learning about yourself, about other people, how other people react and how you react in certain situations."



LANCE CPL. WALTER MARINO

Staff Sgt. Noel B. Min, a utilities chief for Regimental Combat Team 7, uses his Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu to pin down Cpl. Chris N. Meza, an air conditioning mechanic for RCT-7, aboard Camp Dwyer, Afghanistan, Jan 26. Min, a certified Marine Corps Martial Arts black belt instructor and third-degree blue belt in BJJ, teaches fellow Marines his knowledge of BJJ.

A home away from home



LANCE CPL. M.C. NERL

Marines from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, from Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, relax in the Palm Springs, Calif., United Service Organizations Tuesday at the Palm Springs International Airport. The USO is involved in many programs aboard the installation including Wounded Warriors.

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

PALM SPRINGS, Calif. — The United Service Organization's office in Palm Springs, Calif., is reaching out to the Marines and sailors of the Combat Center to accomplish their mission of improving morale and welfare by partnering with other organizations to sponsor multiple events aboard the installation this year.

The USO is contributing through their presence at events aboard the installation, proving it's not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog, said James K. Dowler, the USO's hospitality liaison, and a native of Athens, Ohio.

"When we support the

programs on base, we'd be there to show hospitality and provide in-time services," Dowler said. "We're not the kind of organization that writes a lot of checks. Money can be contributed through us, but for these events we take our few volunteers we have and lend a hand and make our presence known on the base."

Richard Stelk, a military liaison with the USO, said the organization is becoming even more involved with the installation to increase understanding of their cause and what they bring to the table as an organization.

"Our outreach to the base is meant to promote awareness of what we offer to the Marines and sailors," said the

Bayard, Neb., native. "We just want to make sure everyone on base knows who we are and where we are so we can help them, that's what we volunteered for."

Stelk elaborated on just how deeply the USO is going to be involved on the base.

"The USO has its fingers in a lot of pies in the community over there," he said, referring to the Combat Center. "We just did an event with the Twentynine Palms Wounded Warriors and we're planning one every quarter from now on."

"The USO enjoys playing a role in what's going on on base," he said. "Our volunteers will go out of their way to help the service

See USO, B2

IN BRIEF

HI DESERT PONY LEAGUE

The Hi Desert Pony League for baseball and softball are currently underway at Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms. Additional signups will occur Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Luckie Park. Call 424-6329 or 910-787-2175, or log on to <http://29hdpl.clubspaces.com> for more information.

VARSITY SOCCER TRIALS

The Marine Corps Community Services Sports Department will be hosting trials for the Varsity Soccer Team Tuesday through Thursday at 6 p.m. on Felix Field here. For more information, call Skip Best, the MCCS Sports director, at 830-4092, or Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ian Anthony at 830-7440.

MILITARY ALL STAR BASEBALL TEAM

There will be an open tryout for the U.S. Military All Star Baseball Team for active duty personnel aboard the Combat Center Feb. 21 from 1 to 5 p.m. at Felix Field. The team is currently seeking players for the upcoming "2010 Red, White, and Blue Tour." For further information and questions, call Randy Husted at the Marine Corps Community Services Sports Office at 830-4092 or e-mail your questions to hustedr@usmc-mccs.org.

HOPE FOR THE WARRIORS ACCEPTING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Hope For The Warriors is accepting applications for their biannual spouse scholarships, which recognize spouses and caregivers of combat wounded as well as spouses of the fallen after Sept. 11, 2001. Five total awards amounting to \$5,000 each will be given. For application and additional eligibility requirements, visit <http://www.hopeforthewarriors.org>. Applications must be post marked by midnight of April 12. Questions may be submitted to scholarships@hopeforthewarriors.org.

MARINES MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The Marines Memorial Association scholarship program is offering free membership to the association for scholarship eligibility to all active and veteran military personnel. There are a significant number of scholarships available at either the \$2,500 or the \$5,000 level. All applications are due by April 30. For more information and eligibility requirements, log on to <http://www.marineclub.com/page/scholarship.aspx>.

OFFICERS' SPOUSES CLUB SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

The Officers' Spouses Club now has scholarships available for the 2010-2011 academic year. If you are a military family member applying to an accredited two or four-year institution for undergraduate study or vocational certificate, you may be eligible. All application materials must be postmarked by March 1. For more information or to receive an application, e-mail oscscholarship@gmail.com or call 910-9576.



Liberty Call

Local Events

Sara Petite & The Sugar Daddy's & Elliot Randall & The Deadmen!

Description: The bands will play classic rock favorites
When: 7:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday
Where: Pappy and Harriet's Pioneertown Palace
53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information call 365-5956 or visit
<http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Theater: 'Blithe Spirit' final performances

Description: Last chance for the Noel Coward comedy
When: 6 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 2:30 p.m., Sunday
Where: Theatre 29
73637 Sullivan Road, Twentynine Palms
For information call 361-4151 or visit
<http://www.theatre29.com>.

Steve Lester's Songwriting, Poetry, and Rhythm

Description: Open mic night
When: 7 to 10 p.m., Wednesdays
Where: Rattlesnake Jake's
51572 Twentynine Palms Highway, Morongo Valley
For more information call 363-6513 or visit
<http://www.rattlesnakejakes.net>.

Theatre: The Purr-joined Parlor

Description: A comedy by local playwright Wendy Cohen
When: 8 p.m., Saturdays, 2:30 p.m., Sundays through March 7
Where: Groves Cabin Theatre
8768 Desert Willow Trail, Morongo Valley
For reservations and information call 365-4523 or visit
<http://www.grovescabintheatre.org>.

Sunday Brunch Music with Michael Callan

Description: Acoustic old school blues
When: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Where: The 29 Palms Inn
73950 Inn Avenue, Twentynine Palms
For more information call 367-3505 or visit
<http://www.29palmsinn.com>.

From Vienna to Broadway benefit concert

Description: Featuring popular music selections from Johann Strauss to Richard Rogers
When: 2 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 21
Where: The Blak Box Theatre
61231 Twentynine Palms Highway, Joshua Tree
For more information call 366-3777 or visit
<http://www.hidesertplayhouse.com>.

Lower Desert

Comedy: Martin Lawrence

Description: The comedic actor performs standup
When: 8 p.m., Friday
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit
<http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Comedy: Larry the Cable Guy

Description: Blue Collar Comedy legend performs standup
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 20
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit
<http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Music: Cheap Trick

Description: The power pop band performs
When: 9 p.m., Friday, Feb. 26
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit
<http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Sinbad

Description: The comedian performs stand up
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, March 6
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon
For more info call 800-252-4499 or visit
<http://www.morongocasinosort.com>.

Music: Tony Bennett

Description: The legend performs
When: 8 p.m., Thursday, March 11
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit
<http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Sunset Cinema

The Sunset Cinema is getting an upgrade

The theater will be closed until late February for a lighting project which will enhance your movie experience.

We apologize for any inconvenience. The Lifelong Learning Library has movies for check out new releases, classic titles and everything in between. Call 830-6685 for more details or stop by building 1524 to check them out.

Streep torn between lovers in 'Complicated' comedy

NEIL POND

AMERICAN PROFILE

It's Complicated

Rated R

As an actress, the wonderful Meryl Streep can make you believe anything.

Well, almost anything. In 'It's Complicated,' she almost - almost - makes you believe that a divorced, working mom could be living in a sprawling, immaculately furnished and flawless maintained California hacienda... and thinking about making it even larger. And that's after both her kids are grown and out of the nest.

Running your own muffin shop, it seems, is not only the way to ride out a recession, but to surf ahead to even bigger Martha Stewart dreams! Who knew?

If you can get around that whopper, you'll have less trouble settling in for the storyline of 'It's Complicated,' which involves a comedic love triangle between Streep's character, Jane, her randy, philandering ex-husband (Alec Baldwin) and the nice-guy, divorced architect (Steve Martin) working on her expansion.

There's some funny stuff here, especially if you're old enough to appreciate what it's like to be looking for second (or third) chances at

love after the passions of youth have turned into the particulars of middle age. In other words, this isn't a movie to which teenagers are likely going to flock.

Baldwin looks like he's having fun playing a rascally charmer, arduously and earnestly trying to worm his way back into Jane's graces (and bed). Martin, cast in a straight role that calls on little of his usual dexterity as a comedian, does have one particular standout scene at a party where his character and Jane step one hilarious toe over the line. Streep is the pedestal around which everything else spins as Jane swoons, seeks advice from her therapist, giggles with her girlfriends, keeps those muffins comin' and tries to decide what to do.

One of the funniest bits involves a video chat, a naked Baldwin and Martin's shocked reaction when he gets an accidental eyeful of something he clearly wasn't expecting.

This kind of broad-strokes, romantic romp has been done before, certainly, and the movie has its share of stalls, sputters and scenes that seem like they're simply recycling. A cooking montage looks like a goofy, playing-around outtake from Streep's outstanding work in 'Julie & Julia,' and Baldwin's charm-



COURTESY PHOTO

'It's Complicated' is a love triangle comedy between Streep's character Jane, philandering ex-husband played by Alec Baldwin and nice guy architect Steve Martin.

swarmy character often seems like he's channeling Jack Donaghy, whom Baldwin portrays with such polished ease on TV's '30 Rock.'

But the pedigree of the cast brings some unique, all-star freshness to the concept, and Jane's dilemma will resonate with any woman who's ever had to weigh the relative merits of two very different suitors.

Older moviegoers often complain that Hollywood, in its pursuit of youth, isn't making anything for them anymore. Well, grown-ups, here you go - especially if you don't mind a little bedroom humor, a grownups-high-on-pot joke and the sight of a nude, reclining Alec Baldwin with an open laptop as his high-tech fig leaf.

USO, from B1

members out."

Stelk and Dowler, both former service members, said they know from first-hand experience how much of an impact the organization makes all about at the USO.

Families are also welcome to enjoy the hospitality offered at the USO, said Stelk. "Dependants can come in at any time when we are open," he said. "All they need is their [identification] card. It's a common misconception that you need the active duty military person there, but all dependants need is their identification."

Sgt. Xavier Alvarez, a field

radio operator with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, from Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, testified to how much the USO helps out when traveling in the air.

"I've stayed at plenty of these places before," said the Albuquerque, N.M., native. "It's always good to know that you have a place to crash when you're on the road."

According to the USO's website, it is conveniently located facility (adjacent to the baggage claim) features all the amenities and comfort of a modern commercial airline lounge. The hours of operation for the Palm Springs USO are 8 a.m. to 12 a.m. every day, and the staff allows people to stay overnight as well, for more information call 866-1100, or visit <http://www.palmspringsuso.com>.

Cinema 6

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From Paris With Love (R) Everyday: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00	FREE Military Day Sun. Feb. 21st	Feb. 19 - Shutter Island Feb. 26 - Cop Out Feb. 26 - The Crazies

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4:00	4:25	4:30	*4:40	*4:45	*5:00	*5:10	*5:45
15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Saturday/Sunday*							
Palm Springs Airport	Indian Canyon & Andreas (Casino)	Indian Canyon & Tacheva (Hospital)	Stater Bros WalMart	MCAGCC			
12:00	12:10	12:15	12:50	1:35			
*6:00	*6:10	*6:15	*6:50	*7:35			

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Combat Center Sports



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

David Wrench, a member of the Jive Turkeys, jumps to avoid a well aimed throw from Brant Dowd, a player with Red Dot, during a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League match Tuesday at the East Gym.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Kalyn Sanders, the last player remaining for the Jive Turkeys, tries to use evasive maneuvers after a ball is launched directly at him during a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League match Tuesday at the East Gym. Sanders was unable to move quick enough and was eliminated—ending the match in favor of Red Dot.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

"Scuba" Steve Sterle winds up to launch the ball across the court during a dodgeball match between his team, the Jive Turkeys, and Red Dot Tuesday at the East Gym.

Intramural dodgeball standings

TEAM	WINS	LOSSES
Red Dot	5	1
Jive Turkeys	4	2
Cranial Crashers	4	2
Bad Karma	4	2
Hospital	4	2
Sitting Ducks	3	3
Scrubbs	3	3
Worst	2	4
Plaza Sesamo	1	5
Lollygaggers	0	6



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Jive Turkeys player "Scuba" Steve Sterle slows his approach before grabbing the ball at the start of a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League match against Red Dot, Tuesday at the East Gym.

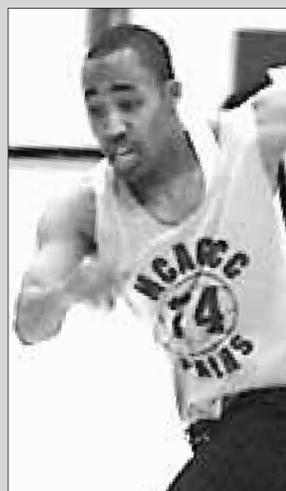


CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Red Dot players Jack McNellie and Chad Muhlenbruck use the 'slingshot' throw to fling the dodgeballs at their opponents during a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League match Tuesday at the East Gym.

Athlete of the Week

Name: William Roots
Job title: Operating room technician
Recognition: Plays for the hospital's basketball team in the Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League.
Favorite aspect: "The competition, setting up different plays."
Advice to aspiring athletes: "Play hard and don't give up."



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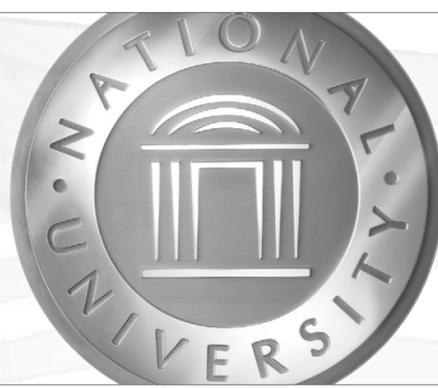
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CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Benjamin Thompson, a player for MCCES A, tries to dribble around CLB-7 players Shane Daley and Ardonus Scruggs during a Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League game Wednesday at the East Gym.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Hospital player William Roots saves the ball just before it soared out of bounds. Roots passed the ball to a teammate, who scored two points.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Hospital player William Roots goes up for a layup while Joe Dilling, a player for 3/4, tries to block the shot from behind during a Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League game Wednesday at the East Gym.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Hospital player William Roots gains some air as he tries to sink a basket over 3/4's Alex Sumrow during a Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League game Wednesday at the East Gym.

2010 Intramural Basketball standings

TEAM	WINS	LOSSES
3rd CEB	4	0
MCCES All-Stars	3	0
1st Tanks	3	0
IPAC	3	0
Tatitlek	3	0
Ole School	3	1
MCCES A	2	2
MWSS-374	1	2
MCCES B	1	2
3/4	1	4
CLB-7	0	2
NHTP	0	3
VMU-1	0	4
CLD	0	4

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